United Nations A/56/127–E/2001/101

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
2 July 2001

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session
Item 12 of the preliminary list*
Report of the Economic and Social Council

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2001
Item 13 (k) of the provisional agenda**
Economic and environmental questions: public administration and development

Five-year assessment of the progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/225 on public administration and development

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/56/50.
** E/2001/100.

01-43666 (E) 180701

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 53/201 of 15 December 1998, the General Assembly endorsed Economic and Social Council decision 1998/220 of 23 July 1998, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to conduct a five-year assessment of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 50/225 of 19 April 1996, on public administration and development, and to report his findings to the Assembly through the Council in 2001.

2. Following the major United Nations conferences and summits in the 1990s, the General Assembly, in its resolution 50/225, stressed the importance of transparent and accountable governance in all sectors of society. It also recognized the need for public administration systems to be sound, efficient and well equipped with the appropriate capacities and capabilities; invited Governments to strengthen their public administrative and financial management capacities through public-sector administrative and management reform, with emphasis on enhanced efficiency and productivity, accountability and responsiveness of the public institutions; and encouraged, where appropriate, decentralization of public institutions and services.

3. In the same resolution, the General Assembly acknowledged the important role of United Nations activities and programmes in public administration and development, and called for their enhanced effectiveness and synergy, with a view to assisting Governments, at their request, to improve their responsiveness to meet the basic needs of all and to achieve sustainable development in all countries. Moreover, the Assembly recommended that the Secretary-General take appropriate measures in order to ensure maximum coordination of activities of the United Nations system in the field of public administration and development.

4. The present report seeks to take stock of current trends and assess the progress made and challenges faced by Governments and all concerned partners, both within and outside the United Nations system, in the implementation of resolution 50/225. In addition, it addresses the recommendations adopted by the Group of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance at its fifteenth meeting (New York, 8-12 May 2000), as contained in the Secretary-General's report on the subject (E/2000/66).

5. Within the five-year assessment, overall analyses and findings will be supplemented, in the form of addenda to the present report, by background materials, such as a summary of national submissions in response to the questionnaire addressed to government officials responsible for public administration and an overview of contributions received from the relevant international organizations, both within and outside the United Nations system, on their activities in the area of public administration and development. All background information will be posted at the web site: http://unpan.org/dpepa.asp and will be accessible through the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN).

II. Current trends and challenges affecting public administration

6. At the beginning of a new millennium, there is great potential for enhanced prosperity in the world and for the advancement of human rights, social equity and peace. Major achievements in many fields of human activity have greatly contributed to ameliorating the living conditions of many people across the globe. The progress in science and medicine accounts for an increase in life expectancy and a dramatic decline in infant mortality. Information and communication technology has opened the doors to greater interaction and interconnectedness, shrinking distance and time. Globalization has created new opportunities for economic development. Trade barriers as well as capital controls have been lifted in many parts of the world, allowing for enhanced economic exchanges. The flow of foreign direct investment, especially to developing countries, has opened new venues for economic growth.

7. Despite advancements in every branch of knowledge, increased global wealth, and the opportunities unleashed by globalization, the world today faces great challenges. The benefits of globalization remain highly concentrated within a relatively small group of countries. Poverty, inequality, civil war, and the spread of deadly diseases, including HIV/AIDS, are devastating many countries and compromising their hope for a better future. All these challenges affect public administration in many ways and at various levels. The State and its institutions are increasingly subject to pressure in both the domestic and international arenas. New challenges and persisting

problems call for major innovations and reforms in public administration. It is essential that the State, especially in developing countries, strengthen its administrative capacity and enhance the effectiveness of public institutions. Overall, public administration systems have a crucial role to play in the quest for peace, greater freedom, social equity and sustainable development.

A. Alleviation of poverty and income inequality

8. Alleviating poverty and income inequality is the priority objective and the raison d'être of public administration. At present, half the world — nearly 3 billion people — lives on less than US$ 2 a day while the richest 20 per cent of the global population receive more than 80 per cent of the global income. Inequality between developed and developing countries continues to grow, as well as disparity within the most advanced countries. The increase in poverty, coupled with the deterioration of human capital and the widening gap between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak, the skilled and the unskilled, the networked and the isolated, calls for greater capacity-building at the national level and concerted action at the international level.

B. Advancement of human rights and gender equality

9. Despite the progress made by many countries in protecting human rights, there are still too many cases of violations of fundamental freedoms and human suffering across the world. Minorities in many countries are still not fully integrated into the social and economic fabric of society. Many suffer from discrimination, deprivation of basic rights, physical abuse and, in extreme cases, imprisonment without a fair trial. Promoting democracy is a prerequisite to ensuring the respect for human rights, but the rule of the majority must be counterbalanced by safeguards to protect minority rights. Great advances have been made in this field, especially since the 1980s, when the so-called "third wave" of democratization spread to many parts of the world. An increasing number of countries have taken steps towards the realization of the rights stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other instruments. Yet, human rights violations continue to occur in various parts of the world. This poses a great challenge to national and international governance institutions. At the national level, Governments should continue to promote and protect all human rights, by developing appropriate legislation and reinforcing judicial administration systems. At the international level, greater coordination of efforts is required to combat old and new phenomena which constitute an offence to human dignity and liberty, such as the illegal trafficking in children and women.

10. All countries have made, in varying degrees, efforts to promote gender equality. Substantial ground has been covered in providing guarantees of equal protection of women before the law. However, further measures are needed to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, both in developed and developing countries. Governance institutions and public administration systems should strive to elaborate policies, adopt practices, and enhance resource allocation mechanisms to ensure full participation of women in all social, economic and political fields, including public administration itself.

C. Making globalization work for all

11. National administrative systems are operating in an environment that is increasingly being shaped by globalization. Closer economic, social and cultural interaction and greater interconnection between various regions of the world are part of this process, which is likely to accelerate in the future. New rules integrating global markets have been devised, but they have not always been beneficial to developing countries. In fact, the benefits of globalization have been unevenly spread among and within countries, while the costs have been borne by the weakest sectors of the population. In addressing globalization, more attention should be given to social, environmental and labour concerns.

12. It is being increasingly recognized that globalization cannot be built on market forces alone but must also be based on a platform of shared values, including freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, and shared responsibilities. This in turn calls for better governance at the national and international levels alike. At the national level, greater capacity is needed to face the many challenges of globalization. At the international level, States must learn how to govern better together. The international institutions should become better attuned to the new realities of the twenty-first century, so as to enable States to deal more effectively with cross-border activities as well as the scourge of poverty and inequality. The challenge for

public administration systems at all levels is to devise effective means to harness the opportunities of globalization for all, while minimizing its negative effects. Some major concerns in this area are outlined below.

13. *Migration of skilled workers, unemployment, and economic insecurity.* Globalization has facilitated the movement of skilled labour across national boundaries but has also resulted in further brain-drain from developing countries. The brain-drain effect is impoverishing developing countries and depriving them of their most skilled human resources. Globalization has also produced greater economic insecurity, especially among vulnerable groups of society, in both developed and developing countries. People fear losing their jobs, as companies can easily relocate to other regions of the world where wages are lower. National public administration systems must become more responsive to these new problems and must promote incentive mechanisms to retain skilled workers within their economies while ensuring that social networks are in place to support workers who suffer sudden unemployment.

14. *Challenges to the fiscal capacity of States.* Economic globalization and advances in information and communication technology are likely to seriously undermine the ability of countries to collect taxes and determine the distribution of the tax burden. While most industrial countries are collecting more tax revenues than before, there are "fiscal termites" gnawing away at the foundations of their tax systems. Firstly, the growth of e-commerce will lead to virtual transactions, which are difficult to trace. It will also produce a shift from production and sale of physical products to digital transactions, leading to vague concepts of tax jurisdiction, which in turn makes it difficult to define who should pay the taxes or collect them. Secondly, electronic money will substitute for real money in individual transactions, and this could create significant problems for tax authorities, since electronic cash can be made available through accounted or unaccounted systems. The latter, lacking any central record of transactions, would pose a risk to both value-added tax and income tax collections. Thirdly, growing trade within transnational corporations with operations in different countries will lead to a potential abuse of "transfer pricing" mechanisms through the manipulation of prices, to move profits from high-tax jurisdictions to low-tax ones. Fourthly, the increase in offshore financial centres and tax havens will facilitate money-laundering and tax evasion. Fifthly, new and innovative financial instruments, such as derivatives and hedge funds operating from offshore centres, will make it difficult to identify individual beneficiaries, transactions or jurisdictions. All these problems require collective state intervention at the international and national levels. At the international level, States must cooperate to prevent the erosion of fiscal autonomy by fostering greater tax harmonization, while at the national level, tax administration systems must become more efficient and transparent in order to ensure the viability of social policies.

15. *Technological divide.* Information and communication technology has presented unprecedented opportunities and risks for the developing world. It has the potential to foster economic and social progress, but it also risks bypassing or marginalizing countries that already lag behind in technological innovations. States need to address the major impediments to the participation of the majority of the people in developing countries in the information age, such as lack of infrastructure, education, capacity-building, investment and connectivity.

16. *International criminal networks.* States are increasingly confronted with new and sophisticated forms of crime, which affect their own territory but are transnational in nature. Increasingly, criminal networks take advantage of the most advanced technologies to traffic around the world in illicit drugs, arms, precious metals and stones, and even people. A new form of slavery is developing, and children and women are particularly vulnerable to these new threats. The proliferation of criminal activities calls for the adoption of new methods and techniques to fight crime and requires enhanced cooperation at the international level as well as greater capacity-building in the areas of crime prevention, detection and law enforcement.

D. Population prospects and the impact of HIV/AIDS

17. Developments in the demographic sphere directly affect the well-being of people. It is therefore imperative that Governments remain keenly aware of demographic trends and prospects, so as to adjust public-sector administrative systems and services to emerging needs. According to the latest estimates, the

world population in mid 2000 was 6.1 billion and is currently growing at the rate of 1.2 per cent, or 77 million people, per year. Over the next 50 years, developing countries will continue to account for the bulk of the population increase, while the most rapid growth is expected in the least developed countries. In developed countries, population is coming of age. As a result, the global number of elder persons (60 years and above) will more than triple, from 606 million today to nearly 2 billion by 2050. At the same time, international migration is projected to remain high, with the more developed regions expected to continue being net receivers of international migrants, with an average gain of about 2 million per year over the next 50 years. Because of low fertility, this migration has a significant impact on population growth in the more developed regions.

18. The impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic on the world's population is worsening in terms of increased morbidity, mortality and population loss. Since the epidemic began, HIV/AIDS has spread to every corner of the globe and has killed a total of 21.8 million people. Sub-Saharan Africa is by far the worst affected region, with the highest adult HIV prevalence rate. Still rapidly growing, the epidemic poses a serious threat to development. By impeding growth, weakening governance, destroying human capital and eroding productivity, HIV/AIDS undermines countries' efforts to reduce poverty and improve living standards. Governments are losing valuable skilled employees and are confronted with mounting expenses for health and orphan care, reduced revenues and lower return on social investment.

19. These demographic trends are posing a serious challenge to national and international governance systems. In developing countries, Governments will have to deal with a wide range of problems related to the exponential increase in population and the propagation of deadly diseases, such as HIV/AIDS. In the developed world, administrative systems will have to undertake a number of reforms, so as to meet the needs of the growing number of the elderly and to respond to an increasingly diverse society.

E. Protection of the environment and sustainable development

20. Protecting the environment is a compelling challenge of our times, which requires greater action at the national and international levels. States must be prepared to collaborate on this matter through special agreements and commitments if the world is to be preserved for future generations. Climatic changes during the twenty-first century have the potential to lead to future large-scale and possibly irreversible changes in our ecosystems at the continental and global levels. Phenomena such as droughts, floods, avalanches, heat waves and windstorms are very likely to increase. Natural systems at risk include glaciers, coral reefs and atoll, mangroves, boreal and tropical forests, polar and alpine ecosystems. Poor countries will be the most affected, because their economies are in climate-sensitive sectors and their institutional and administrative capacities are too weak to manage these environmental challenges successfully.

F. Prevention and management of violent conflicts

21. The nature of conflict has greatly changed in recent decades. Violent and armed conflicts are not occurring any longer on a large scale between States but rather within national boundaries. Ethnic cleansing and acts of genocide have been perpetrated in several regions of the world, leading to great human suffering and the destruction of the social and economic basis of many societies. As shown by recent experience, if there are no institutions through which conflict can be channelled and if mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of disputes are not in place, violence and conflict can escalate into long and devastating civil wars.

III. Public administration responses

22. Many States have embarked on a number of reforms to enable the State and public administration to address the above-mentioned challenges more efficiently and effectively. For the five-year assessment of the progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/225, several Governments provided information on their reform efforts. The main features of the reform process are summarized below. Obviously, not all countries have given equal attention to all the highlighted areas. Depending on specific situations and national priorities, reform strategies have varied. Addressing the key reform areas described below is considered a fundamental step in enabling States and public administration to cope successfully with the challenges of the new millennium.

A. Promoting democratization and decentralization

23. Democracy offers the best opportunities for self-determination and self-government, and it promotes freedom in many ways. It provides the grounds for accountable, responsive, predictable, and peaceful governance systems. Promoting democracy is of the utmost importance to guarantee that people participate in all spheres of the political, economic and social life of a polity. Democratization is therefore an essential prerequisite to sustainable development, and appropriate reforms should be introduced to ensure the full development of a democratic society. Particular emphasis should be placed on strengthening parliaments, on enhancing political participation and on devising appropriate rules and regulations to ensure that elections are conducted in a fair, transparent and efficient manner.

24. As a part of the democratization process, decentralization has been promoted in various degrees and with varying success in different countries. One condition for its success is a legislature able to prompt, initiate, monitor, and guide the process of political and financial decentralization. It also requires an adequate financial resource base for local governments to function properly and competent and capable human resources.

B. Developing legal and institutional frameworks and economic governance systems

25. The reinforcement of political institutions and their adjustment to the demands and pressures of a changing environment have been a priority for many developing countries and countries with economies in transition and should continue to remain at the top of the reform agenda. It is widely acknowledged that greater sustainable development and prosperity can be achieved only in the presence of strong, healthy state institutions. In this respect, Governments need to build effective regulatory and institutional frameworks, which include a political system that ensures broad participation; an efficient legal system that secures the rule of law; an independent judiciary that ensures reliable processes for resolving disputes; a strong parliament to counterbalance the power of the executive; an efficient tax system that provides the necessary resources for social policy reforms; and a financial system that is modern, efficient, and transparent. Equitable, transparent and consistent legal systems are needed to provide solid foundations and structures for the functioning of social institutions.

26. With regard to the private sector, it is noteworthy that markets can flourish and sustainable economic prosperity can be achieved only if there is a strong democratic and effective State which provides, through rules and institutions, an enabling environment for private-sector development. Adequate legal and regulatory frameworks are at the core of sound economic governance. This includes the correction of market failures, competition laws and anti-trust regulations. In the absence of appropriate institutions, competition is stifled and lawlessness prevails, leading to instability, corruption, chaos and usually the emergence of kleptocracies. Indeed, the central error of reform programmes introduced in several countries has been to believe that by eliminating central planning and by introducing private property rights, the market system would automatically develop and that it would operate on its own. It is now widely recognized that the market is not a deus ex machina or a mysterious force that operates through an invisible hand. On the contrary, the market is a social institution which has been developed over time by conscious human action. Experience has shown that the private sector cannot develop fully unless Governments institute a legal framework that guarantees and protects private property, governs business relationships and enforces the commitments involved in business contracts. In many instances, Governments should take the lead in simplifying procedures and regulations for the registration and licensing of businesses. Governments have a very important role to play in promoting an effective regulatory framework in which the private sector can fully develop and operate. Constant efforts should be directed at ensuring that institutional frameworks are responsive to the changing environment of today's world.

C. Facilitating debureaucratization

27. In a new era, obsolete bureaucratic structures cannot work effectively. Debureaucratization and decentralization must go in tandem with new approaches to management, by exemplifying openness, adaptability, participation, flexibility, diversity and responsiveness. Many new tasks of governance require public authorities to act as mediators, advocates or promoters, actively seeking partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organizations or

otherwise endeavouring to engage civil society in the pursuit of developmental objectives.

D. Developing ethics and anti-corruption strategies

28. Cutting across the range of skills and knowledge needed to build effective management in today's fast-moving world is the concept of professionalism, which, in the past few years, has made a marked re-entry into the field of management. A concern over the decline of standards and corresponding need for integrity in public life have driven the debate on the scope and significance of public service professionalism and anti-corruption strategies. Professionalism in government is based not only on relevant deep knowledge and aptitudes or skills but also on a coherent, widely shared and profoundly internalized values system which manifests itself in the pursuit and detailed application of knowledge, the use of particular skills and in the exercise of control over practice. Indeed, professionalism consists of standards and values which underpin the practices and conduct of public servants from day to day. Although these values and standards must reflect the changing expectations of clients and recipients of social services, they must also represent the mission and aspirations of the public institutions. Hence their worth is an important guide and motivational tool. Governments have taken steps and should continue to take urgent concerted measures to reinforce the ethics infrastructure of their countries and to introduce a comprehensive set of mechanisms, including merit pay and performance benchmarks, to deal with corruption and generally raise the standards of public life, nationally and globally.

E. Enhancing transparency, accountability and efficiency in the public sector

29. Along with anti-corruption strategies, there is also a need to elaborate a framework of rules, processes and practices which determine how power is exercised. The new global environment calls for greater consistency, transparency, coherence and accountability in the public sector and a cadre of top-level managers who can promote the above-mentioned values and operate effectively in the new international environment. Enhancing efficiency in the use of resources as well as in the daily operations of national administrative systems is of the utmost importance. New mechanisms have been introduced in many countries to ensure that public administration systems are efficient and responsive to the needs of the people and that civil servants are accountable for the performance of their functions. Ensuring accountability through appropriate mechanisms is essential to guarantee that public administration operates in an efficient, effective and transparent manner.

F. Providing public services for all

30. Access to basic public services is a prerequisite to alleviating poverty and promoting greater equality. The lack of access to basic services such as health, education, sanitation, electricity and potable water is compromising the future of many people in the developing countries. If Governments do not actively intervene to facilitate universal access to primary and secondary education, to health, sanitation, housing and appropriate infrastructures, significant imbalances among the different social sectors of society will persist and will perpetuate "perverse circles of inequality". A core function of public administration is to ensure the provision of basic services for all and to develop new and more efficient mechanisms for public service delivery. In order to overcome budgetary constraints, many countries have started involving civil society groups in the provision of public services and, in many cases, this strategy has proved to be successful.

G. Improving resource mobilization and financial management systems

31. Fiscal policy plays a central role in enabling a country to achieve its economic and social objectives, from macroeconomic stability to sustainable growth and poverty reduction. In the 1990s, fiscal policy played an important part in public policy deliberations of many countries as concerns with fiscal dimensions of high unemployment, inadequate national savings, excessive budget deficits and public debt burdens intensified. Looming crises in the financing of pension and health-care systems are also putting pressure on fiscal policy management. In response to these challenges, many developing countries and countries with economies in transition have made major efforts to promote the mobilization of domestic financial sources by increasingly relying on taxation and seeking to raise additional resources by "widening the tax base".

32. Those developing countries and countries with economies in transition which are confronting unsustainable fiscal deficits, unabated debt servicing and declining development assistance will have to endeavour to overhaul the strategies of domestic and external financial resource mobilization through tax and non-tax instruments that are fair and equitable. They should also initiate tax reforms to simplify and rationalize the tax structure. In the area of tax policy, such reforms may involve simplifying the tax system by eliminating relatively low-yielding taxes, broadening the tax base, streamlining the rate structure and reducing the high marginal tax rates. Reforms should also aim at establishing a level playing field, by curtailing special treatments and incentives, reducing the scope for tax evasion and promoting voluntary compliance with tax statutes, enhancing equity, and reducing distortions caused by existing complex and inefficient tax systems. While tax administration reforms are generally associated with the modernization of tax systems and procedures, enhancement of institutional and technical capacities are also of great importance to ensure a more efficient tax administration system. In short, tax reforms should aim at equity, simplicity, transparency and comprehensiveness.

33. In many countries, financial management capabilities have been eroded by the pursuit of financial populism, ineffective and distorted budgetary mechanisms and the breakdown of the existing financial management institutions. A central concern for all countries is how to harmonize methods of strategic management and control of aggregate financial variables with processes for changing expenditure priorities and enabling effective and innovative management of service delivery institutions. It is becoming clear that countries need to reform public financial management since traditional approaches have failed to produce sound, efficient and effective systems of resource mobilization, budgeting and financial management. These changes involve strengthening capacity in three areas: central fiscal policy-making, public expenditure management and accountability, and revenue mobilization.

H. Tapping the potential of e-government

34. Government officials have been increasingly supportive of the use of information technology in public administration, especially in the developed countries, paving the way to what is now commonly known as "e-government". Information technologies (IT) can serve a variety of different ends such as more efficient and timely delivery of public services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, citizens' empowerment through access to information, and more effective and efficient government in general. The resulting benefits may include less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, cost reduction, and greater citizen satisfaction with government performance. All over the world, countries are taking a more innovative approach in interacting with their citizens, by adapting many of the practices successfully being used in e-commerce.

35. Information systems have greatly improved effectiveness, efficiency and productivity in government in a number of ways. For example, integrated network-based national revenue management systems ensure that information is managed, stored, and retrieved with greater efficiency. They also enable revenue officers to receive cases more quickly and automate and modernize the tax collection process. Furthermore, IT empowers the treasury department to collect taxes more productively, which is a benefit to government and the country. Electronic distribution of government documentation and increasing public access to government information are also being developed very quickly in a significant number of countries. Many Governments have set up web sites and connected databases and information systems to the Internet, thus enabling the public to search, locate, view and download government reports, studies, computer software, data files and databases. IT promotes the sharing of information resources and enables Governments to provide better information services in a cost-effective manner. By improving public access to information, IT has helped to enhance transparency and accountability in government. In the past two decades, IT has also played a major role in helping spread the concept of a more efficient and responsive public sector, based on "service management". Emphasis on this concept has also led to extensive use of IT tools for measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of public services.

36. IT has also produced changes in the modalities of public service delivery. For centuries, the notion that citizens might actively participate in all public affairs and make substantive contributions in policy decisions remained a distant prospect. Now government web

sites, email and other means are turning this into a reality. Electronic polling, for instance, by either public or private institutions, will probably take place in the very near future.

37. State agencies and enterprises in many countries are currently engaged in restructuring their organizations in order to adapt to the new IT environment. In this process, they are removing layers of traditional management, compressing job categories, creating work teams, training employees in multilevel skills, simplifying business processes and streamlining administration. The outcomes of this re-engineering have demonstrated the scope for administration reform and shown that, ultimately, decisions on the pace and extent of such reform depend on the quality of the top management.

38. The recognized potential of information technology in improving government performance has not been effectively tapped in all parts of the world. Many countries are lagging behind in the use of IT in government, in part because they do not have adequate infrastructures and in part because technological penetration is still low. Although there is still a strong and wide digital divide between the connected and the unconnected, rapid advances in many countries are taking place. Governments should continue to promote the use of IT in public administration, and international agencies should help in this endeavour.

I. Fostering partnerships between the State, the market and civil society

39. Efforts for strengthening the State should not undermine the positive contribution the market can make in harnessing the opportunities of globalization for development and in supporting the delivery of services effectively and efficiently. The State and the market are not mutually exclusive, nor are they adversaries. Both need to work as strategic partners in development. In this sense, the market also needs to be strengthened in order to become an effective partner of the State. Experience has demonstrated that strong States and strong markets go hand in hand. Indeed, the major obstacle for development in the least developed countries and developing countries in general is that too often responsibilities are being shifted from weak public-sector institutions to a very weak or almost non-existent private sector. The success of administrative reforms in developing countries should be built on the respective strength of the private sector, civil society, and the State.

J. Strengthening capacity for managing diversity and conflict prevention

40. Governance and public administration systems at the national, regional, and international levels must have adequate capacity to integrate conflict management into their policies and practices. However, until now, conflict management has been directed mostly to societies that are about to slide into violence or that are in the midst of armed conflict. In other words, too much attention has so far been paid to solving conflicts rather than creating appropriate institutions to prevent violence and armed conflicts. In particular, greater emphasis should be placed on strengthening mechanisms of conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of disputes, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction. The costs of late intervention are too high, and public administration systems should start investing in strategies to prevent conflict. More effective conflict resolution mechanisms would enable countries to use resources for more urgent needs of an economic and social nature. In order to ensure early prevention of conflict, it is necessary to identify the root causes of violence. Countries should also strengthen consensus-building mechanisms and reinforce the rule of law. Experience has shown that most violent conflicts have escalated due to the lack of appropriate institutions to manage diversity. Weak States, including weak judicial systems, and national administrative systems that are not well equipped to manage social, cultural and political diversity are responsible for not providing the conditions for conflict resolution. As a consequence, managing diversity is becoming a major challenge for public administration in development. This challenge will most probably increase with time, due to several factors, including migration, social and cultural cross-fertilization and the fact that societies are becoming more diverse rather than homogeneous in composition. Therefore, Governments need to develop the appropriate capacities for early warning, conflict prevention and long-term peace-building. The longer-term solution is that administrative systems encourage the development of mediation and negotiation skills, as well as foster a culture of dialogue and participation at all levels of the political life.

K. Promoting international cooperation and regional integration

41. To face globalization, Governments have forged new regional alliances and promoted closer integration with States that share similar historical, cultural and economic backgrounds. Regional integration is proving to be useful in the areas of collective security, economic cooperation, and legal harmonization. Many countries maintain close ties with neighbouring and other States. Whether for economic and commercial purposes, administrative convenience or political alliances, regionalization is gaining ground. Thus, Governments are striving to adjust their administrative structures, policies and practices to the requirements of regional intergovernmental organizations. In order to be effective partners in such organizations, developing countries should seek to not only upgrade the skills but also change the attitudes of public servants in a number of areas. Fostering negotiating skills, promoting the study of languages, enhancing the knowledge of international law and regulations are among the most important ingredients for success in a globalizing world.

IV. Lessons learned

42. The weight of the available evidence strongly suggests that, in the past two decades, many developing countries and countries in transition have been victims of advice on policy decisions which, in the last analysis, bore very little relevance to their particular circumstances and needs. In contrast to the strategies pursued in prior years, such policy prescriptions de-emphasized the role of the institutions of government, which they portrayed in essentially negative terms, as obstacles to growth and the process of globalization. This negative view of the State went in tandem with attacks against the public service sector. What can we say of the outcomes? There have been reported successes, mostly in the North and West, but also stories of failures in many developing countries and countries in transition. The characterization of the 1980s as "the lost decade" and of the 1990s as a "mixed bag at best" gives the measure of the distance between expectations and outcomes.

A. Enhancing countries' ownership of reforms

43. Preliminary findings embodied in this document give only a partial picture of what is clearly a highly complex, prismatic situation worldwide. However, the weight of available evidence points to a convergence of views on certain salient features of past approaches and measures.

44. First, a rather dogmatic and technocratic approach, which failed to take into account the complexities of particular national circumstances, overemphasized one facet of reform over all others (e.g., cutback management). Now widely criticized as "reductionist", this approach took for granted a measure of convergence of managerial cultures which appears, in retrospect, somewhat unrealistic. It correspondingly pressed for "the one best way" solution which earned it the description: "one size fits all". The Group of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance, at its fifteenth meeting, "expressed strong scepticism about 'one size fits all' solutions, and emphasized the importance of customized approaches to meet the diverse needs of individual countries".[1] The Group also observed that "an overly technocratic or purely economic growth approach to institutional development divorces the institutional strategy from the socio-economic and political environment which it is meant to serve".[2]

45. Secondly, a related criticism has faulted the relationship between recipient and donor countries. Contrary to the officially accepted doctrine, too many programmes proved to have been supply-driven. In all too many cases, accordingly, reforms have been externally induced. Too often, as a result, style has invaded substance, and programmes were concerned with "quick fixes" rather than long-term progress.

46. The lessons of experience strongly point to the conclusion that, for reforms to be successful and, accordingly, aid programmes to produce "user-friendly" results, they must clearly be home-grown, demand-driven, internally consistent and duly coordinated at the national policy level.

47. It has become apparent that the design and conduct of programmes of reform require the steady involvement of competent national teams. The nationals must be in the driver's seat. Main policy decisions cannot be "outsourced" to consultants, no matter how good they may be. However well intentioned and technically accomplished, foreign advice must stay within the bounds of counselling and guidance. Overstepping that limit is both counter-

productive and dangerously short-sighted. Carried too far, it undermines the confidence of peoples in their respective Governments and institutions. Democracy is "hollowed out" and accountability lost when citizens conclude that their elected Government has lost control of events.

B. Making democracy meaningful: the need for a strong, strategic and democratic State

48. Experience demonstrates that "hollowing out democracy" leads to public cynicism, apathy and alienation. Often this is the outcome of "hollowing out the State". It has been suggested that States face "loss of power and autonomy" and that over the next century, state sovereignty and the systems of democracy and accountability will have to pass to new forms of "global agency". Until that happens, however, what we call "the nation State", which is different today from half a century ago, is the best instrument we have at our disposal to accomplish our purposes in democratic ways.

49. The State is indispensable to democratic governance. It has been pointed out, however, that several of its tasks cannot be carried out, as in the past, in a centripetal fashion out of the national capital. Important functions of government have been devolved on the subnational level and, more importantly, major decisions of government are taken in the framework, or subject to provisions, of intergovernmental regimes (e.g., World Trade Organization) and supra-national bodies (e.g., European Union). As the Group of Experts has aptly pointed out, this situation makes major new demands on Member States of the United Nations, for which developing countries and countries in transition are often ill-prepared. Indeed, it may be argued that the capacity deficit — that is to say, the distance between what countries have and what it takes to make them well-functioning democracies and effective players on the international scene — is one of the main causes of the crises plaguing the world.

C. The State as the linking pin of governance

50. One of the principal findings and messages of this analysis is that we need the State, but that the State, increasingly, will function on three levels:

(a) The national, or central government, level;

(b) The subnational level, as a result of a process of devolution of functions to local government structures, or even non-state actors operating within bounds established by the State and under its supervision;

(c) The international level, where an entire edifice set up for global governance is slowly taking shape but is clearly underpinned by nation States and driven by the initiatives which they deploy.

51. Increasingly the State is called upon to serve as a "linking pin" of these three levels, to harmonize and coordinate activities and processes involving diverse actors, governmental and non-governmental, national and international, with interests and agendas that may differ substantially. A strong supportive centre within each nation State represents an essential prerequisite of two dimensions: domestic peace, tranquillity and socio-economic development and progress on the path to decentralization, deregulation and debureaucratization; and international cooperation in ways that bring prosperity not only to a minority but to the great majority of the world's population.

52. It is essential to develop the concept of a "strong strategic State", which is the antithesis of "bureaucracy" and "big government". The stress is fully on quality, integrity and equity rather than volume or quantity. The concept emphasizes leadership, empowerment, example, motivation, discussion, negotiation, accommodation and conciliation, rather than "slash and burn" and similar top-down command approaches. To raise performance levels in this regard, special emphasis should be given to professionalism and capacity-building or capacity-reinforcement of government.

V. An agenda for capacity-reinforcement and the role of the United Nations

53. In resolution 50/225 the General Assembly identified priorities for United Nations activities in the area of public administration and development. Following the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly on public administration and development (April 1996), the Group of Experts adopted a number of specific recommendations on follow-up actions. By its decision 2000/231 of 27 July 2000, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Group of Experts at its fifteenth meeting

(E/2000/66). The most important and relevant activities, which deserve to be further pursued and enhanced, are highlighted below.

A. Advocacy

54. The importance of drawing attention to emerging issues, analysing their potential scope and consequences and highlighting policy options cannot be underestimated. Through its ad hoc expert group meetings, seminars, conferences and publications, the United Nations system highlights these emerging issues for the benefit of both developed and developing countries. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the world is going through changes that affect everyone intensely but in different ways. A multifaceted process, globalization has produced a measure of convergence in policies and practices but also growing disparities in certain other areas. Diversity of predicaments and clashing trends produce conflicting perspectives. The United Nations should be acutely aware of such plurality of views and of the fact that only a few so far have been accorded a hearing. The goal is to secure a more balanced debate, one that brings together viewpoints from all the world's main regions, search for complementarities, try to understand differences and hopefully produce some useful recommendations for future action.

55. Traditionally, this has been the role of the Group of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance. Although its recommendations are regularly reviewed by the Economic and Social Council, its weak link with the Council has not lent it the support needed to speak with authority on the multifaceted relations between public administration and economic and social development, which are of concern to the world community at large, but especially the developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

56. One of the signal developments identified in resolution 50/225 is what may be described as the globalization of major issues in governance and public administration. These matters, which until recently were generally considered to be the exclusive domain of sovereign States and, thus, unfit subjects for international forums (e.g., corruption), are now being debated openly among the representatives of Member States. This change of public opinion reflects a growing sense that progress in some areas can only be the result of international action. This should become the role of a standing advisory body of experts and practitioners from the world's main regions, who can provide the Economic and Social Council with authoritative advice on current issues and trends in public administration and finance.

Restructuring and revitalizing the Group of Experts

57. In recommendation 4, adopted at its fifteenth meeting, the Group of Experts took the view that its relations and interactions with the Economic and Social Council should be greatly reinforced and that the deliberations of the Council on matters concerning economic and social development could greatly benefit from the input of the Group of Experts. To make this more effective, the Group recommended that the Council review the status and reporting arrangements of the Group of Experts.[3]

58. Pursuant to the aforementioned recommendation, and in order to assist the Economic and Social Council in carrying out the review process, the Bureau of the Group of Experts, in consultation with the Secretariat, reflected on various options available within the framework of the Council's subsidiary bodies, taking into account the recent measures adopted by the General Assembly and the Council for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

59. The reflection was conducted against the background of the current terms of reference and status of the Group of Experts. By its resolution 1199 (XLII) of 24 May 1967, the Council decided that the United Nations programme in public administration should be reviewed from time to time by a meeting of experts and that the report of the meeting should be submitted to it for consideration. The Group is currently a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council. Experts come from countries in different stages of development, at the invitation of the Secretary-General, and serve in their individual capacities. The Group of Experts generally meets every two years for one or two weeks. The Council is appraised of the Group's work through a report of the Secretary-General.

60. Bearing in mind the growing importance of governance issues for the development process, the reflection addressed ways, on the one hand, to enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Group of Experts and its impact on the intergovernmental deliberations

on economic and social issues and, on the other, to reinforce policy guidance by the Council and coordination with other subsidiary bodies, in particular regarding the follow-up to major United Nations conferences.

61. Since these were among the considerations that led to the changes recently introduced by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1998/46, in respect of the Committee for Development Policy, the Council may wish to consider a similar approach in relation to the Group of Experts.

62. Thus, the composition of the Group, while continuing to comprise experts serving in their personal capacity and being nominated by the Secretary-General, could be the subject of consultations with interested Governments and be approved by the Economic and Social Council. The membership could be patterned after that of the Committee for Development Policy (which has 24 members) and should reflect an appropriate geographical and gender balance and be drawn from the interrelated fields of public economics, public administration and public finance.

63. If the terms of office of the experts were to be of three years, as is now the case for the Committee for Development Policy, annual meetings for a period not exceeding five working days would provide for the necessary continuity and focus and would facilitate enhanced interaction with the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary machinery.

64. To the same ends, provision might be made for the Council to give guidance on the work programme of the Group of Experts so as, inter alia, to enhance its impact on the work of intergovernmental machinery in the economic and social fields. To support the Council in this task, the Group could submit its proposals on its work programme for examination and approval by the Council. The Group would adopt its report at the end of its session and would submit its report directly to the Council at its substantive session.

65. The General Assembly, the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and the Secretary-General could also propose, through the Council, issues for consideration by the Group of Experts.

66. One way of projecting the renewal of the Group of Experts and the greater development orientation being sought might be to rename it "Committee on Public Administration for Development".

B. Building common understanding

67. The global diversity of practices, cultures and viewpoints only serves to reinforce the need for building consensus on core issues of importance and for building networks to facilitate debate among state institutions. Although national considerations are essential ingredients of administrative systems of each country, commonly recognized principles and guidelines have been developed, such as guidelines on electoral integrity and administration; charters of civil service; codes of conduct for public employees; public accounting and auditing standards. The United Nations, through the work of a revitalized Group of Experts and the Economic and Social Council, could play a key role in this area, due to its universality and neutrality. This is a developing area that has the potential to expand.

68. For example, the African Ministers of Civil Service, with the technical support of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, drafted and adopted a charter for the African public service, which:

(a) Defines a framework to guide the public services in Africa in taking such legislative, regulatory, technical and practical measures as may be required to create propitious conditions for the proper functioning of the public service and improve the quality of its services;

(b) States and defines the principles and rules of conduct for public service and State employees, who shall foster a neutral and stable environment conducive to the strengthening of ethical values and the image of the public service, as well as the professionalism of its employees;

(c) Expresses the will of African States and underscores their political and moral commitment to improve the services provided to citizens and ensure the efficient use of the resources allocated for such services.

69. In this connection, the Economic and Social Council endorsed recommendation 8 of the Group of Experts that "serious consideration be given to expand on the work already done by the African ministers of public service, and consider drawing up a United Nations model charter of public service".

70. To ensure that the revitalized Group of Experts and the Council can work to full capacity and have at their disposal the wealth of information on public sector data and global trends on which they can establish, develop and articulate an informed opinion and advice, research and analysis bodies should command the full support of a competent research team and related secretariat. Much needed is a systematic study of current trends and policies, which would greatly assist the quest for strategies and methods of reform more appropriate than those already tried in the past. The United Nations, first in the field and sponsor of arguably the oldest programme of technical cooperation in public administration and governance, is well positioned to put it into effect.

C. Information-sharing and exchange of experiences

71. Access to reliable and up-to-date information on the part of Governments embarking on public administration reform is an essential component of sound decision-making. The United Nations system should enhance its capacity to collect, organize and disseminate information in public administration. The United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN) is a powerful tool, made available to Member States for instant access to information (see annex below). The capacity of UNPAN to link regional organizations of public administration in an interactive network of exchange should be expanded to encompass national institutions and key national policy-making organs, such as ministries of public administration.

72. In recommendation 14, the Group of Experts fully supported and endorsed the plan of action of the development dividend project of UNPAN as a mechanism for cooperation utilizing information technology in this field. It stressed the need to deepen the impact of the project by strengthening the capacity of national ministries and national schools and institutions of public administration in developing countries and countries in transition to access data, information and training through information technology.[4]

73. Information is to decision makers as oxygen is to living organisms. Decision makers responsible for taking decisions affecting the structure and functioning of public administration benefit greatly from direct exchange with their counterparts on difficulties encountered, successes and failures and on specific implementation modalities. The United Nations system should continue to facilitate these contacts and exchanges through the organization of meetings and forums in which policy makers and high-level officials participate. In this regard, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the recommendation of the Group of Experts that "the United Nations establish appropriate mechanisms to provide the opportunity for ministers and/or high-level officials of Member States responsible for public administration to meet periodically to discuss themes of common interest and exchange experiences".[5]

D. Building strategic capacities and essential skills

74. There can be little doubt that giving democracy meaning and raising the level of competence in governance begin with the reinforcement of the capacity of States to meet the needs and expectations of their citizens. Other than human rights, which are universal by nature, these needs and expectations are not the same throughout the world. Rather, they are a function of culture and circumstance. Precisely on this account there is an urgent need to build leadership skills and strategic capacity for the design, conduct, monitoring and evaluation of reform programmes in all developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

75. In this age of globalization and rapid advances in science and technology, there will always be a need for foreign expertise and specialized assistance. However, what is necessary for developing countries and Governments in general is to have at their disposal and under their command the necessary knowledge, know-how and a range of skills that will enable them to:

(a) Intervene proactively on the national, subnational and international levels;

(b) Design, implement and evaluate effective national policies;

(c) Conduct the consultations and negotiations needed at both the international and the subnational levels in order to elicit, articulate, promote and defend the public interest;

(d) Help establish and consolidate peace both nationally and internationally and play their part as members of the global community effectively.

76. The United Nations can and should help with policy advisory services. In the area of public administration, reforms and initiatives are closely linked to national circumstances. Sound policy advice, however, can provide national authorities with policy options, which can subsequently be internalized into national strategies and programmes.

77. Human resources development constitutes the driving force of all institutions in all decision-making processes. The United Nations system should, therefore, step up its action to develop the human resource base of public administration of developing countries and countries in transition. The network established for UNPAN could offer a model for regional cooperation among Member States in the development and refinement of those core skills, with the help of modern training technology. Activities should focus on the development of competence in such areas as public policy planning and development; programme management; human resources management and development; management of money, equipment, technology and information; and performance measurement, monitoring and evaluation.

78. In order to bridge the digital gap, at a time when information and communication technology permeate all facets of life, including public administration, the United Nations should devote specific efforts to enable Governments to tap the potential that ITs have for the functioning of public administration, for the delivery of services and for enhancing relations with citizens. The results already achieved through UNPAN should be multiplied by developing initiatives aimed at connecting national public administration authorities with the most up-to-date technological advances. The role of modern technology in modernization is crucial. However, it is idle to pretend that technology has all the answers and can produce results without appropriate training of personnel and reinforcement of core values. Moreover, it is the structural reforms in the machinery of government and the work organization in the agencies of government that would allow technology to yield its full potential.

E. Reinforcing core public service values

79. A recent United Nations publication, entitled *Public Service in Transition: Enhancing its Role, Professionalism, Ethical Values and Standards* (ST/ESA/PAD/SER.E/77), contains analytical papers regarding the ethics of public service. According to it, the core public service values include:

(a) Revaluation of learning, integrity and competence;

(b) Stress on the merit system, with due regard for affirmative action in favour of historically or otherwise disadvantaged groups;

(c) Growing sensitivity towards and respect for citizens' needs;

(d) Low tolerance for laxity, corruption and crime;

(e) Increasing recognition of the need to acknowledge and reward industry, loyalty, accomplishment and merit;

(f) Increasing recognition of the value of the neutrality of civil servants and of the need to secure a degree of autonomy in public personnel management and freedom from extraneous pressures, in order to safeguard high quality performance, motivation, integrity and professionalism in the public service.

80. At its fifteenth meeting, the Group of Experts called for "the proclamation of a United Nations public service day to celebrate the value and the virtue of service to the community at the local, national and global levels, with prizes to be awarded by the Secretary-General for contributions made to the cause of enhancing the role, prestige and visibility of public service"[6]. This recommendation reflects the important changes that have taken place and transformed the landscape of public administration. It reminds us, moreover, that management technologies need to be infused with values that serve the public interest.

F. Providing assistance in institution-building

81. It is idle to pretend that such values can be established and fostered without any regard to the political, social and cultural environment in which a public service operates but — also and most importantly — without appropriate structures, legislative and policy frameworks designed to attract, retain, develop and motivate the needed men and women, using their skills productively and effectively. Assisting developing countries and countries in transition in building or refining these structures and policy frameworks is an urgent priority and a strong recommendation of the present report.

82. Helping developing countries and countries in transition confront the pressing challenges of globalization must also encompass programmes designed to enhance capacity in coping with diversity, complexity and change. The need is institutional, in other words, it requires the crafting or fine-tuning of structures for consultation, mediation and policy coordination. It also manifests itself in the new profile needed for senior policy advisers and public senior managers. At the local, national and international levels, both policy advisers and senior public managers are increasingly faced with the demanding tasks of reconciling differences, mediating disputes, resolving thorny conflicts, negotiating agreements and trying to build consensus in a volatile environment where differentiation takes on a variety of forms. These include diversity of cultures, ethnicity, language, religion or ideology; diversity of political, legal and economic systems; and diversity of conditions, interests and viewpoints.

83. The above are all compounded by an enormous range of fields of specializations that go into policy-making and policy implementation. These challenges require States and other players on the international scene to strengthen their capacity for long-term policy planning, concertation, consultation and coordination. They call for institutions and competencies needed to handle negotiations on multifaceted issues of considerable complexity. The international community, the United Nations especially, can play a major role in this respect through policy advisory services, targeted training programmes and information exchange. Its task is really twofold:

(a) At the level of States, it needs to cooperate with developing countries and countries in transition in building the capacity to provide democratic and more effective governance and to be more active players on the international scene;

(b) At the international level, it needs to cooperate with all States as well as non-governmental organizations and other non-State actors in improving, modernizing and fine-tuning the machinery for global governance.

G. Improving coordination of development assistance

84. The road map outlined above makes it more imperative than ever that initiatives and programmes aimed at assisting Member States to reform their institutions and their administrative systems be part of a coordinated and coherent strategy. Much too often, well-meaning multilateral and/or bilateral agencies have sponsored piecemeal and at times contradictory assistance programmes.

85. In the field of governance and public administration, when uncoordinated efforts are coupled with special requirements or conditionalities, they further weaken the ability of the recipient countries to master and internalize the process of reform.

86. Following the provisions of resolution 50/225, the United Nations system has taken numerous steps to enhance coordination in this area, as highlighted in the previous report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/53/173). A new strategic partnership has been forged between the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme in the broad area of governance and public sector management. The purpose of the partnership is to ensure that the two bodies are mutually supportive in this field, operate in a complementary and non-competitive manner, reinforce their respective mandates and activities and eliminate duplication of efforts.

87. Similar partnerships are being developed between and among agencies active in this field. The challenge now lies in extending such coordination to non-United Nations organizations and the other development assistance actors. The Economic and Social Council could play a crucial role in further promoting coherence of action in development assistance in public administration.

VI. Conclusion

88. The five years since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 50/225 have witnessed the multiplication of important reforms in many countries along the lines defined by the General Assembly. An important lesson that has emerged is that administrative and management reform is a continuous and multifaceted process. The rapid changes in today's world require the adaptation of institutions and systems to this ever-changing environment. In the present report, special emphasis has been placed on the need to assist developing countries and countries with

economies in transition in reinforcing their capacity to govern.

89. The report explores the nature of capacity-building in tandem with the concept of the strong strategic State. It defines capacity-building or capacity reinforcement as the needed coefficient of three interrelated and mutually complementary pursuits: institution-building; human resources development; and technological adequacy.

90. The capacity to manage continuous reform and change in an orderly fashion should become a key component of capacity-building efforts. The guidance provided by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, in conjunction with the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly on public administration and development and its follow-up, has proved to be crucial to Member States in this continuous and multifaceted process of reform. It is essential that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council continue to provide policy guidance in the forms they deem most appropriate to help Member States to maintain the momentum gained, consistent with the "road map" for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

Notes

[1] E/2000/66, para. 73

[2] Ibid., para. 48.

[3] Ibid., para. 7.

[4] Ibid., para. 17.

[5] Ibid., para. 8.

[6] Ibid., para. 6.

Annex

United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN)

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, following the mandate provided in General Assembly resolution 50/225, developed the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN). UNPAN is designed to establish an electronic portal linking online regional and national institutions devoted to public administration and finance for information exchange, experience-sharing and on-the-job training in the area of public-sector policy and management. Its long-term objective is to build the capacity of those regional and national institutions to access, process and disseminate relevant information via up-to-date information and communication technologies for the promotion of better public administration.

UNPAN offers: a far-reaching access to experiences in the practice of public policy development and management at the international, regional, national and local levels; capacity-building and South/South cooperation in information and knowledge management; and a demand-driven and interactive two-way information network. Most significantly, UNPAN is a dynamic process, and not a static outcome, which aims at responding continuously to the needs of its users in their most critical areas of work.

UNPAN's beneficiaries are government agencies, public administration regional and national institutions, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. Its main themes are: public economic policy; governance and institution-building; civil service and public sector reform; management innovation and development; and public finance. It provides five major online services/products, including information; training; technical advisory services; conferencing; and worldwide directories.

UNPAN is executed and managed by the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in close partnership with some 15 international and regional institutions in public administration and finance, representing all regions of the world.

The UNPAN online network may be accessed at http://www.unpan.org.